

INCOMING  
MESSAGE

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SECRET

PRECEDENCE (ACTION)

PRECEDENCE (INFO)

FLASH

FLASH

18d

Z 071101Z

FM CINCPACFLT

TO RUHLHQ/CINCPAC

INFO RUEKDA/JCS  
RUECW/CNO

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 11652 SEC. 5(A) and (D)

By JB NARS, Date 4-28-76

~~SECRET~~

PROOF OF ATTACK (U)

A. JCS 7770 DTG 061642Z NOTAL

B. CINCPAC 061840Z NOTAL

1. IAW REF B, FOLLOWING INFO IS SUBMITTED FOR RESPONSE TO REF A:

A. USS MADDOX (DD 731), WHILE ON PATROL IN THE GULF OF TONKIN, WAS ATTACKED AT 1508 GOLF ON 2 AUGUST BY THREE NORTH VIETNAMESE MOTOR TORPEDO BOATS. MADDOX WAS, AT THE TIME OF ATTACK, APPROXIMATELY 30 MILES FROM THE NEAREST LAND. DURING THIS UNPROVOKED ATTACK, THREE TORPEDOES WERE FIRED AT MADDOX. ALTHOUGH NO TORPEDOES HIT MADDOX, ONE MACHINE GUN BULLET WAS OBSERVED HITTING THE SHIP. THIS BULLET WAS SUBSEQUENTLY REMOVED FROM THE AMMUNITION MAGAZINE IN WHICH IT HAD LODGED AND WILL BE RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES AS EVIDENCE. MADDOX FIRED HER GUNES IN SELF DEFENSE AND WAS ABLE TO REPULSE THE ATTACKERS. MADDOX PROBABLY SANK ONE PT IN THIS ENGAGEMENT. THIS ATTACK HAS BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE NORTH VIETNAMESE.

B. AFTER THIS ATTACK, MADDOX REFUELED AND RETURNED TO THE PATROL IN THE GULF OF TONKIN IN COMPANY WITH USS TURNER JOY (DD 951). AT ABOUT 2108 GOLF ON 4 AUGUST, HEN MADDOX AND TURNER JOY WERE ON A SOUTHEASTERLY COURSE APPROXIMATELY 60 MILES FROM THE NORTH VIETNAMESE COAST, THREE HIGH SPEED RADAR CONTACTS WERE DETECTED ABOUT 14 MILES TO THE EASTWARD OF THE TWO SHIPS. AT 2119 GOLF THE CONTACTS, WHICH WERE DISPLAYED ON THE RADAR SCREENS OF BOTH SHIPS, INDICATED PROBABLE

INFO.....CJCS-2 DJS-3 SJCS-1 J3-6 DIA-1 NMCC-2 CSA-2 CSAF-2 (CMC)-2  
(WHITE HOUSE)-3 FILE-1 (25) SO (STATE) (CIA) (NSA)

REF B NOT HELD, WILL FURNISH ON REQUEST IF OBTAINABLE

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HOSTILE INTENT BY CHANGING COURSE AND SPEED TO CLOSE THE RANGE AND TAKE COURSE WHICH WOULD PERMIT LAUNCHING TORPEDOES. MADDOX AND TURNER JOY OPENED FIRE WHEN IT WAS EVIDENT FROM THE MANEUVERS OF THE APPROACHING CONTACTS THAT THEY WERE PRESSING IN FOR TORPEDO LAUNCHING POSITION. ABOUT ONE MINUTE LATER MADDOX, HAVING HEARD A TORPEDO RUNNING ON HER SONAR (HEARD BY CAPTAIN HERRICK, US NAVY, COMDESDIV 192, AND OTHERS IN THE CIC), INFORMED TURNER JOY THAT A TORPEDO HAD BEEN LAUNCHED AND WAS HEADED IN THE DIRECTION OF TURNER JOY. LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE JOHN JEROME WARRY III, FILE NUMBER 664848, US NAVY, ATTACHED TO TURNER JOY AND SERVING AS THE FORWARD GUN DIRECTOR OFFICER, SIGHTED A TORPEDO COMING FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE RADAR CONTACTS WHICH HAD AMBUSHED THE U.S. SHIPS. TURNER JOY TURNED TO AVOID THE TORPEDO AND L& 2-446, LARRY O'LITTON, 5976601, SEAMAN, US NAVY, WHO WAS WITH LTJG WARRY IN THE GUN DIRECTOR, AND EDWIN R SENTETL, 3440026, SEAMAN APPRENTICE, US NAVY, WHO WAS SHIP'S LOOKOUT FOR THE PORT SIDE, SIGHTED THE TORPEDO PASSING PARALLEL TO TURNER JOY AT DISTANCE OF 300 FEET. THE TORPEDO PASSED ALONG TURNER JOY FROM AFT TO FORWARD ON THE BEARING FROM WHICH MADDOX HAD REPORTED THE TORPEDO WAS APPROACHING. DURING THE ATTACK A SEARCHLIGHT WAS OBSERVED BY ALL SIGNAL BRIDGE AND MANEUVERING BRIDGE PERSONNEL INCLUDING THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF TURNER JOY. THE BEAM OF THE SEARCHLIGHT DID NOT TOUCH THE SHIP, BUT WAS SEEN TO SWING IN AN ARC TOWARD TURNER JOY AND WAS IMMEDIATELY EXTINGUISHED WHEN AIRCRAFT FROM THE COMBAT AIR PATROL ORBITING ABOVE THE SHIPS APPROACHED. TURNER JOY PERSONNEL MAKING STATEMENTS REGARDING THE SEARCHLIGHT SIGHTING KARE RECHARD M. BACION, 5178897, SIGNALMAN SECOND CLASS, US NAVY; GARY D. CARROL, 5881266, SIGNALMAN THIRD CLASS, US NAVY. THE ATTACKING TORPEDO BOATS WERE ACTUALLY SEEN AND DESCRIBED BY THE FOLLOWING TURNER JOY PERSONNEL: DONALD V. SHARKEY, 5184893, BOATSWANS MATE THIRD CLASS, US NAVY; KENNETH E. GARRISON, 6874988, SEAMAN, US NAVY; DELNER JONES, 5499624, SEAMAN APPRENTICE, US NAVY; AND ARTHUR B. ANDERSON, 6931937, FIRECONTROLMAN SEAMAN APPRENTICE, US NAVY. THESE PERSONNEL SIGHTED THE TORPEDO BOATS WHEN THE COMBAT AIR CONTROL AIRCRAFT OVERHEAD DROPPED FLARES. NONE OF THESE PERSONNEL HAD SEEN A MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT BEFORE (TURNER JOY NOT HAVING BEEN IN THE 2 AUGUST ACTION), BUT ON THE BASIS OF THEIR OBSERVATIONS EACH ON INDEPENDENTLY DREW AN ACCURATE SKETCH OF A MOTOR TORPEDO BOAT SIMILAR TO THOSE KNOWN TO BE OPERATIONAL IN THE NORTH VIETNAMESE NAVY. MOREOVER, THE SKETCHES WERE SIMILAR TO THE TORPEDO BOATS WHICH HAD ATTACKED THE MADDOX IN DAYLIGHT ON 2 AUGUST. COMMANDER G.H. EDMONDSON, US NAVY, COMMANDING OFFICER OF ATTACK SQUADRON 52, AND HIS WINGMAN WERE FLYING COMBAT AIR PATROL IN THE VICINITY OF MADDOX AND TURNER JOY AT THE TIME OF THE TORPEDO ATTACK. BOTH OFFICERS WERE FLYING AT ALTITUDES RANGING BETWEEN 700 AND 1500 FEET WHEN THEY

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SIGHTED GUN FLASHES ON THE SURFACE OF THE WATER AS WELL AS LIGHT ANTI-AIRCRAFT BURSTS AT THEIR APPROXIMATE ALTITUDE. ON ONE PASS OVER THE US DESTROYERS, BOTH PILOTS POSITIVELY SIGHTED A "SNAKEY" WAKE ONE AND ONE-HALF MILES AHEAD OF THE LEAD DESTROYER, USS MADDOX. THE WEATHER WAS OVERCAST WITH LIMITED VISIBILITY; HOWEVER, SURFACE VISIBILITY WAS SUFFICIENT FOR SERGEANT MATTHEW B. ALLASNE, 1605290, USMC, AND LANCE CORPORAL DAVID A. PROUTY, 19990505, USMC, WHO WERE MANNING MACHINE GUNS ON MADDOX, TO SIGHT LIGHTS PASS UP THE PORT SIDE OF THE SHIP, GO OUT AHEAD, AND THEN PASS DOWN THE STARBOARD SIDE. BOTH BELIEVED THE LIGHTS TO BE FROM ONE OR MORE SMALL BOATS GOING AT HIGH SPEED.

2. FOREGOING NARRATIVE DIRIVED FROM OPERATIONAL SUMMARIES AND A SERIES OF STATEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN FORWARDED TO CINCPACFLT BT MESSAGE AND ARE BEING FORWARDED SEPARATELY TO CINCPAC AND JCS. POINTS INCLUDED IN THIS NARRATIVE ARE SUBSTANTIATED IN GREATER DETAIL IN THESE STATEMENTS.

3. APART FROM THE ONE INSTANCE OF MACHINE GUN BULLET STRIKING THE USS MADDOX DURING THE ACTION ON 2 AUGUST, THERE WAS NO DAMAGE INFLICTED ON ANY U. S. UNIT DURING EITHER ACTION.

4. PHOTOGRAPHY OBTAINED FROM ON BOARD USS MADDOX DURING THE 2 AUGUST ACTION WILL BE FORWARDED SEPARATELY BY MOST EXPEDITIOUS MEANS. SO FAR AS CAN BE DETERMINED, THERE WAS NO PHOTOGRAPHY OBTAINED DURING THE NIGHT ACTION ON 4 AUGUST.

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